

cording to the day on which it occurred. An infant which arrived on an unpropitious day might be abandoned.

One scholar has it that during much of their boyhood and adolescence the boys lived apart, in a common house, where they were educated. In practice it may be that they actually spent the time with their mother's relatives and were trained by them. The segregation of the boys and girls is, however, conjectural and is denied by other scholars.

On reaching man's estate the youth was inducted into that rank with formal ceremonies, receiving the cap which indicated that he was now recognized as an adult.

The social life and even the recreations of the aristocracy, such as archery and music, were rather rigidly controlled by custom.

From the upper classes came the lords and the great landed proprietors. By no means all those of patrician birth possessed large estates. Many were petty landowners, a kind of sturdy squirearchy from which came numbers of the thinkers and military adventurers of the later centuries of the Chou. Others were employees of the state, scribes, school-teachers, diviners, or experts on ritual. Still others were merchants, for in time, as we have said, a fairly extensive domestic and interstate commerce arose in such commodities as salt, grain, silk, horses, and cattle.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Political organization had probably developed in complexity since the Shang, if for no other reasons than that the extent of territory governed had increased. It was still, however, permeated largely by the patriarchal ideal. Civilized society was regarded much as a huge family, and its units as

smaller families.
The religious tie was strong.
The head of the state was, of course, the *Wang*,
or monarch.
In theory the *Wang* ruled because of the decree
of Heaven
(*t'ien mmg*) and the *te* (originally meaning magical
power, but
later, by Confucian scholars, given the moral
connotation of
"virtue") of himself and his ancestors obtained
through obe-
dience to the commands of Heaven. In practice
the authority of
the *Wang* depended very largely upon his own
ability and force
of character. Time-distances were great, and the
leading ter-
ritorial magnates were disposed to act very much
like independent